The way to analyse ‘way’

A case study in word-specific local grammar

Abstract

Traditionally, dictionaries are meaning-driven—that is, they list different senses (or supposed senses) of each word, but do not say much about the phraseology that distinguishes one sense from another. Grammars, on the other hand, are structure-driven: they attempt to describe all possible structures of a language, but say little about meaning, phraseology, or collocation. In both disciplines during the 20th century, the practice of inventing evidence rather than discovering it led to intermittent and unpredictable distortions of fact. Since 1987, attempts have been made in both lexicography (Cobuild) and syntactic theory (pattern grammar, construction grammar) to integrate meaning and phraseology. Corpora now provide empirical evidence on a large scale for lexicosyntactic description, but there is still a long way to go. Many cherished beliefs must be abandoned before a synthesis between empirical lexical analysis and grammatical theory can be achieved. In this paper, by empirical analysis of just one word (the noun *way*), we show how corpus evidence can be used to tackle the complexities of lexical and constructional meaning, providing new insights into the lexis-grammar interface.

Keywords: Corpus Pattern Analysis, empirical lexicography, construction grammar, pattern grammar, corpus evidence, collocation, local syntax, phraseology.

1 Introduction

The advent of corpus linguistics since the 1980s led to the realization that many meanings are determined by the contexts in which words are used, and are therefore not mere concatenations of the meanings of individual words. Since the 1990s, the importance of phraseology in determining meaning has been recognized by European researchers such as Gläser (1986), Cowie (1998), Burger (2008), Granger and Paquot (2008), and Steyer (2015). Computational linguists such as Evert (2011) have shown that the meaning of a word can be inferred from its usage, i.e. its distribution in texts, while some lexicographers, notably Kilgarriff (1997) and Hanks (2009, 2013), have gone even further, arguing that words in isolation do not have meaning at all. Hanks proposes that a word in isolation has meaning potential, rather than meaning as such, and that different meaning potentials of a word are activated by the different contexts in which the word is used. Thus, for the study of meaning, phraseology is all-important. Phraseological analysis usually focuses on the clause as a whole, starting with the verb, but in this paper, we study the implications for phraseology and meaning of a single noun, namely ***way***.

The noun ***way*** plays a central role in the English language. It is one of a small number of very frequent words that help to organize the structure and meaning of an infinitely large number of possible utterances. It has been discussed by construction grammarians, but in hand-picked, isolated constructions, supported by invented and sometimes bizarre examples.

Neither traditional grammars nor traditional dictionaries offer an entirely satisfactory, theoretically well-founded account of how this word is actually used in English. A central plank in the construction grammar platform is that the meaning of an utterance can at best, and then only rarely, be retrieved compositionally by analysis of the meanings of the words in a sentence. So if one of ***way***'s main functions is to facilitate the organization of semantic structure in constructions, it is not surprising that dictionaries fail to capture a satisfactory overview. Fillmore, Kay and O'Connor (1988) put it this way:

> 'Constructions may specify, not only syntactic but also lexical, semantic, and pragmatic information. […] A large construction may specify semantics (and/or pragmatics) that is distinct from what might be calculated from the associated semantics of the set of smaller constructions that could be used to build the same morphosyntactic object.' (Fillmore, Kay and O'Connor 1988: 501)

Sinclair (who was not a construction grammarian) made a similar point rather more eloquently:

> 'A text is a unique deployment of meaningful units, and its particular meaning is not accounted for by any organized concatenation of the fixed meanings of each unit. This is because some aspects of textual meaning arise from the particular combinations of choices at one place in the text and there is no place in the lexicon-grammar model where such meaning can be assigned. Since there is no limit to the possible combinations of words in texts, no amount of documentation or ingenuity will enable our present lexicons to rise to the job. They are doomed.' (Sinclair, 2004: 134)

The Appendix of the present paper offers a corpus-derived overview of the normal constructions in which the noun ***way*** participates, together with its 25 most salient verb collocates and examples selected from British National Corpus (BNC). BNC was compiled during the early 1990s, but was selected for this study as part of the general approach of the Corpus Pattern Analysis project for several reasons, including: 1) BNC aims to present a balanced and representative sample of English language texts; 2) using the same corpus for several different studies ensures homogeneity of approach.

Way normally has the clause role of direct object and is accompanied by a determiner. As we shall see, the subcategory of the accompanying determiner can play an important role in determining the meaning of an utterance. Nearly eighty constructions have been identified in which ***way*** plays a regular, meaning-determining role. The meaning of very few, if any, of these idiomatic constructions can be determined from a concatenation of the constituent words. From an encoding point of view, however, there are unlimitedly many possible and imaginable ways to encode the desired meanings. The patterns listed in Appendix I represent normal, idiomatic ways of using this word to encode meanings. These patterns can be—and are—exploited creatively in a virtually unlimited number of utterances, although the vast majority of actual utterances make use of one or other of the eighty regular patterns. This is broadly consistent with the arguments of construction grammarians. At the end of the paper a number of unifying threads running through several of the patterns are identified, even though at first sight these may appear to be distinct and unrelated. It is suggested that at least some of these patterns are interrelated in systematic ways (though not the ways suggested by

currently available dictionaries and grammars); also that many abnormal but authentic uses are best accounted for as exploitations of norms rather than as rare norms in their own right.

2 The most normal patterns of *way*

The etymology of the word ***way*** can be traced back to Old and Middle English, where the literal, physical sense of *wæg* ('route from one place to another') survives in names of ancient routes (e.g. Icknield Way) and indeed is still productive—or has been revived—in comparatively recent coinages denoting long-distance footpaths (e.g. *the Cotswold Way*) and street names on new housing estates (e.g. *Union Way*). However, analysis of a small sample of 250 randomly selected concordance lines from the BNC via the Sketch Engine (Kilgarriff et al., 2014) clearly shows that ***way*** is very rarely used to denote pathways in modern English – in fact, most of the uses captured in the samples are either conventional metaphors, idioms, or constructions, indicating that this particular sense of *way* is no longer productive.

From the point of view of the relationship between lexical semantics and phraseology, ***way*** ranks in importance alongside the preposition ***like*** (cf. Hanks 2005) and light verbs such as ***take*** and ***make***. The semantic contribution of ***way*** itself is generally rather light, but its contribution to organizing the semantic structure of utterances is substantial. Its most normal function in modern English is to enable people to talk creatively about actions taken in pursuit of a goal. That goal may be a literal, physical goal involving physical movement (as in (1)) or a metaphorical goal (as in (2), (3), and (4)).

(1) signposts and directions which help you to **find your way** around the hospital easily.

(2) Borland has obviously **found a way** around the problem of maintaining data integrity.

(3) Henry II had to **find ways** of preserving family unity.

(4) It is essential that we should **find a way** to control our currency and to make it stable.

A question addressed by corpus linguists but ignored or blurred in generative and other schools of speculative linguistics involves a three-way distinction between normal usage, exploitation of normal usage, and mistakes. Generative and other schools of speculative linguistics aim to account for all possible constructions and word uses with a single unified theory. Corpus linguistics distinguishes normal uses of words from abnormal but authentic usage, mistakes, and bizarre inventions. The first thing to say, then, about (1)–(4) is that all of them are both authentic and extremely normal. The citations are taken from the BNC, which contains many similar examples involving the verb ***find*** governing the noun ***way*** as its direct object. Statistically (according to the Sketch Engine analysis of BNC), ***way*** is the noun most associated with ***find*** as direct object (SkE salience 8.58)[1] and ***find*** is the verb that most often governs ***way*** in the direct-object slot (SkE salience 8.78). Thus, the relationship is reciprocal, which is not always the case. Examining the corpus evidence for this particular collocation enables us to identify several normal patterns of usage and meaning associated with it, with some confidence that we are moving toward reliable generalization.

The pattern analyses provided below and the notation used in them are those of Corpus Pattern Analysis (CPA),[2] an empirical, corpus-driven technique developed by Hanks and colleagues (cf. Hanks 2004, 2013, Hanks and Ježek 2010) and implemented in the *Pattern Dictionary of English Verbs*.[3] CPA patterns are described in terms of stereotypical combinations of clause roles[4] and their typical slot fillers. In other words, the clause roles are populated by lexical sets, which consist, not merely of groups of words belonging to the same part-of-speech class, but of much finer subcategorization by semantic types (which are intrinsic to the semantics of the words) and contextual roles (which are assigned by the context). In traditional pattern analysis—e.g. Hornby (1954), Young (1980), Hunston and Francis (2000)—clause structure is described in terms of grammatical part-of-speech classes, augmented by function words such as particles (transitive and intransitive prepositions). More delicate analysis is not attempted by these authors. This is inadequate. To take a simple example, *firing a gun* and *firing a person* have identical syntactic structures but clearly activate different meanings of the verb *fire*. The sole distinguishing feature between the two uses (and verb senses) is the semantic type[5] of the noun in the direct-object slot: in the first case, the noun *gun* (alongside other semantically similar collocates such as *rifle, pistol, weapon, shotgun, cannon,* and *grenade*) can be sorted into a class using the semantic type [[Weapon]], whereas in the second example, the noun *person* is representative of a huge set of lexical items sharing the semantic type [[Human]]. To further illustrate the point, consider the following pattern for the construction 'V + ***way'***:

A. [[Human]] find {[DET] way} [Advl[Direction]][6]

Pattern A is the most basic, concrete, and literal pattern found in the corpus data. Syntactically, it is a monotransitive construction with an obligatory adverbial of direction. This is the pattern to which example 1 conforms. At least three questions arise with regard to A:

i) Can <u>any</u> adverbial[7] of direction function satisfactorily as the 'third argument' in this expression? The answer to this question is yes. If the adverbial denotes a physical route from one location to another, Pattern A will be activated, with a high probability of the literal physical meaning. However, this does not get us very far, because many uses of *way* are conventional metaphors based on this pattern A.

ii) Does the subject always correspond to the semantic type [[Human]]? The answer here is no. [[Human]] regularly alternates with [[Animal]] in the context of some verbs such as ***eat***, and with [[Institution]] in the context of some other verbs such as ***negotiate***.

iii) The third question concerns the status of the determiner. In literal, concrete uses of *find + way*, the determiner governing ***way*** is often a reflexive possessive determiner co-referential with the subject of the clause. CPA uses a more precise term, namely [REFLDET].

What about Example 2 above ('finding a way around a problem')? Identifying the pattern here is less straightforward. It represents a conventional metaphor, in which the meaning is extended to achieving goals rather than trying to go somewhere physically. The determiner in this extended sense is usually the indefinite article, *a*, while ***way*** as a direct object normally governs *of* with an –ING form or a *to*-infinitive (i.e. *find a way of doing something,* or *find a way to do something*). In abstract uses, the prototypical [[Human]]

subject typically alternates with [[Institution]]. The noun ***way*** is sometimes plural, and the choice of constructions filling the adverbial slot is much more restricted. The pattern identified by corpus analysis is B.

B. [[Human]] find {[DET] way {of [–ING] | to/INF [V]}}

B is the pattern exemplified in examples 3 and 4. People find ways of doing things and they find ways to do things. A fairly small selection of adjectives is also found embedded in this pattern: people find *a good way, a better way, a new way*, or *a different way* of doing something (to do something). A comprehensive corpus-driven pattern grammar will give an account of at least the most salient of these selectional preferences. See the patterns for *go, open,* and *walk* in Appendix I.

However, pattern B, which is very common, does not account satisfactorily for example 2. The example is a perfectly normal, patterned use of *find* + *way*. To capture its meaning, it is desirable to propose a third pattern, C, which is a sort of hybrid between pattern A and pattern B.

C. [[Human]] find {way} {{(a)round | through | out of | past} [[Eventuality = Problem]]}.

In pattern C, it is necessary to list explicitly the prepositions that typically participate in the pattern, as grammar does not – and probably cannot – offer a conventional term for this subset of prepositions or the phrases that they govern.

Finally, a fourth pattern, D, similar in meaning to C, may be proposed, in which the particle is intransitive. In other words, it does not govern a noun phrase. This is analogous to the object-drop alternation of verbs.

D. [[Human]] find {way} {out | forward | through | past}

Notice that the determiner in a clause role is mentioned explicitly in a pattern only when some semantic effect or contrast depends upon it.

CPA suggests that there are a number basic patterns, parameters, and alternations for the use of ***way*** in English. Like all content words, ***way*** both governs and is governed. Detailed analysis of a large corpus sample is necessary in order to find out what governs what, i.e. what the patterns are. This will be carried out in the following sections. The focus for such an analysis should be on patterns of normal, typical usage, not necessary conditions determining all possible uses of the word.[8] In that respect, patterns are closely linked to the notion of collocational preferences, favouring a probabilistic view of language over the incessant need to classify linguistic phenomena using clear-cut distinctions.

2.1 The role of determiners

Focusing on monotransitive constructions in which *way* appears in the direct object slot, we can establish two main groups of elements that are governed by the noun, i.e. determiners and modifiers. Both are syntactically subordinate parts of the noun phrase in which *way* serves as the head. The **determiner** has an important role in pattern identification, as it is crucially associated with certain meanings and repellent to others. For example, a reflexive possessive determiner is strongly associated with goal-achieving senses (cf. example 1 in the previous section). Conversely, the absence of a determiner in a pattern is just as relevant as its presence. Consider, for instance, the following example for '*make* + *way*':

(5) I have vacated that nice little office in back there, *making* ***way*** for an older man […]

(6) As if Alan had excused her, Carolyn *made* *her* ***way*** to the house.

The absence of a determiner in example (5) (or, if you like, depending on your preferred terminology, the presence of a zero article) functions as a flag, signalling that we are dealing with a fixed expression with a specific meaning (***make way for N*** = 'to vacate a location for the benefit of another entity N'). This pattern contrasts nicely with the other pattern found for *'make + way',* where the noun is modified by a reflexive possessive determiner (cf. example (6)).

Way also occurs with a limited set of **premodifiers** and **postmodifiers**. For instance, some patterns allow *way* to be preceded by one of a small set of adjectival premodifiers, but only if the determiner is indefinite or definite, not possessive (e.g. *the* ***new*** *way of doing things, a* ***different*** *way to achieve*). Postmodifiers typically include non-finite infinitival and gerundival clauses, such as the ones listed for pattern B (i.e. *to*-infinitives and *-ing* forms headed by the preposition *of*), or prepositional phrases (cf. pattern C). Just like premodifiers, they typically co-occur with the definite and indefinite article.

2.2 Governing verbs and their arguments

Syntactically, most uses of ***way*** are governed by a finite verb. The relationship in such clauses between the verb and the direct object (***way***) is significant in terms of both syntax and semantics. Nouns and verbs are the principal building blocks of language, as they are the two main contributors of lexical content to an utterance as a whole. The verb is the pivot of the clause and is used with referring expressions (i.e. nouns) to create propositions. It is therefore not surprising that ***way***, a frequently used 'light noun', co-occurs frequently with a variety of verbs, ranging from high-frequency light verbs such as *make, take,* and *give* to highly specialized verbs denoting, for example, sound emission and manner of motion. If we are to explore patterns of normal, everyday use, however, we must focus our attention on those verbs that repeatedly co-occur with the noun ***way*** in the direct-object position. Considering the highly complex semantic and syntactic behaviour exhibited by ***way***, we can presume that any generalizations about the syntactic and semantic properties of the governing verbs will have to be made for each and every pattern separately. A good example for this is pattern A. Consider examples (7) and (8) below, which have the regular structure of Pattern A, but an unusual verb.

(7) Wobbling his ***way*** up the steps, he lifted his arms to a descending mirror and commanded: `Mirror, Mirror on the wall, who is the fairest of them all?'

(8) The temptation to switch off and bluff my ***way*** through the rest of this review never once raised its ugly head.

In this pattern, there are three obligatory syntactic arguments – the subject, the direct object (i.e. '[REFLDET] + way'), and an adverbial of direction. Based on the argument structure, one would naturally expect only transitive verbs to appear in this pattern. However, both *wobble* and *bluff* are normally intransitive. Furthermore, the reflexive determiner is obligatory. Using the verb *bluff* with an indefinite article would yield a sentence that is arguably ungrammatical (e.g. if we were to adapt example (2) and say **Borland has bluffed a*

way around the problem). This suggests that not all verbs that co-occur with *way* can be readily used in all the identified patterns. There appear to be preferences and probabilities in syntactic choices as well as in collocations. The change in the two verb's original valency observed in pattern A is to be attributed to the function of *way* as a *construction-evoking element* (cf. Fillmore, Lee-Goodman, and Rhodes 2012); in other words, when preceded by a reflexive possessive determiner, *way* has the unique ability to **coerce** a wide array of non-stative verbs into taking on additional syntactic arguments. As a result, intransitive verbs all acquire a direct object (i.e. the *way* phrase),[9] whilst non-motion verbs are supplied with an additional obligatory adverbial of direction. This specific configuration of elements is what construction grammarians refer to as 'the *way* construction'.

3 *Way* as a trigger for coercion

The *way* construction features prominently in the literature of construction grammar, where attempts have been made to make sense of the mechanisms governing this linguistic phenomenon both from the synchronic (e.g. Goldberg 1995, Fillmore, Lee-Goldman and Rhodes 2012) and the diachronic (Israel 1996) perspective. Expressions such as (9), (10), and (11) are cited as examples of constructions in which the meaning is partly determined by the construction, rather than by some combination of the meaning of each word and truth-functional logic.

(9) 'They pushed their way through the crowd.' (Levin 1993)[10]

(10) 'The car honked its way down the road.' (Goldberg and Jackendoff 2004)

(11) 'The dog barked its way out of the room.' (Goldberg and Jackendoff 2004)

Now, ***honk*** and ***bark*** are not normally verbs of motion. These verbs are coerced into this role by the construction in which they participate. This phenomenon can best be explained if we consider *way* as the main trigger for the construction. Conceptual approaches to the study of lexicalization patterns across languages, such as the extensive work carried out by Talmy (2000b), emphasize the role of the path as the most basic and crucial semantic component of a motion event – in other words, without a path, the motion event cannot possibly occur. The centrality of path can be used to explain why the noun *way*, which was historically used to express pathways, could trigger the coercion by injecting its semantics into the construction as a whole.

According to Goldberg (1995), the *way* construction is a conventionalised amalgam combining the syntactic and semantic properties of two other constructions, i.e. the *creation construction* ('he created a new path by honking') and *the intransitive motion construction* ('he moved down the road), resulting in three obligatory syntactic arguments (the subject, the direct object, and the obligatory adverbial). Central to her approach is the notion of 'path creation', according to which the *way* construction describes literal or metaphorical motion taking place along a self-created, non-pre-established path, in which the agent encounters some sort of obstacle or external difficulty hindering their progress. Goldberg's account of the construction is strongly characterised by a set of semantic constraints, i.e. a set of necessary conditions that must be fulfilled in order for the construction to be grammatically and semantically plausible. Although her work is widely cited and has its merits in explaining

some of the mechanisms underpinning the *way* construction, her preoccupation with necessary conditions (as opposed to probabilities) represents a serious limitation in her approach to the study language and meaning. This has been demonstrably proven by subsequent work by Luzondo-Óyon (2013), who used new corpus evidence to disprove the validity of Goldberg's proposed set of semantic constraints.

As it happens, the central problem with constructionist approaches to the study of the *way* construction seems to be linked to the way (corpus) evidence is used to inform the analyses undertaken. For instance, consider the examples invented by Israel (1996: 218) and cited by Croft and Cruse (2004: 325):

(12) Rasselas dug his way out of the Happy Valley.

(13) The wounded soldiers limped their way across the field.

(14) **?**Convulsed with laughter, she giggled her way upstairs.

The question mark in 14 expresses the author's doubt about the grammatical well-formedness of the expression; more specifically, Israel describes this use as being 'at best marginal for many speakers' (Israel, 1996: 218). This is surprising. Our analysis of corpus evidence suggests that it is quite normal to use *way* with a reflexive possessive determiner and an adverbial of direction. The construction coerces any verb of sound utterance (as well as certain other types of verbs) into being a verb of movement. In other words, *she giggled her way upstairs* is a perfectly normal, grammatically well-formed sentence of English.[11]

Corpus evidence shows that verbs governing this construction include at least the following, which may be regarded as a first draft of canonical members of the lexical set (to which additional members may be added as appropriate, and which forms a central basis for coercing non-canonical members into it on an ad-hoc basis.)

Manner of motion verbs: *barge, bulldoze, bumble, burrow, crash, crawl, cruise, dance, dodge, gallop, jangle, jostle, lurch, manoeuvre, move, navigate, paddle, plod, plough, ramble, sashay, scramble, scuttle, shuffle, sidle, skip, sleep-walk, slog, squirm, stamp, steamroller, stagger, steer, stumble, swashbuckle, swim, waddle, weave, worm, wriggle, zigzag.*

Sound emission verbs: *bang, bellow, blast, breathe, chuckle, clang, clatter, croak, crunch, gargle, giggle, growl, honk, hoot, moan, puff, roar, sing, sniff, sniffle, sob, splash, squelch, strum, tap, thunder, tootle, twang, warble, weep, wheeze, whistle, whine, whoop, yowl.*

Eating and drinking verbs: *chew, chomp, drink, eat, gnaw, gnash, gobble, munch, slurp.*

Verbs of violent physical action: *batter, battle, beat, bomb, burst, butt, claw, elbow, fight, force, grope, hack, jab, jerk, kick, poke, power, push, scorch, scratch, shoot, shoulder, shove, shovel, slash, smash, struggle, thrust, wrestle.*

Other physical action verbs: *bob, bow, bum, clown, cut, dig, edge, feel, fumble, idle, oil, pick, squeeze, thread, thumb.*

Social interaction verbs: *bamboozle, bluff, bribe, buy, cajole, cheat, con, dupe, earn, flaunt, gamble, joke, lie, negotiate, play, plot, pose, pray, preach, puzzle, scowl, spend, talk, trick, waffle, wangle, wheedle.*

Light verbs: *find, go, give, make, wend, work.*

The social interaction verbs (which typically have negative semantic prosody) denote achievement of an abstract goal; the noise-making verbs tend to denote achievement of a concrete, physical goal (i.e. arriving at a location). Many of the other verbs in these lists, including motion verbs, are used for both abstract and concrete goals. The characteristically negative prosody of social interaction verbs in this paradigm set (*bribe, cheat, lie,* etc.) influences the default interpretation of other verbs in the set, which may not have intrinsically negative semantic prosody: there is nothing intrinsically bad about talking or praying, but the default interpretation of 'talking or praying one's way to a goal' seems to us to suggest that something reprehensible or suspicious is going on. This norm can be overturned in context: *praying one's way to safety* would normally have positive, not negative semantic prosody.[12]

If a verb is already, in its most literal sense, a motion verb, then the {[REFLDET] way} [Adv[Direction]] construction reinforces the notion of movement towards a goal. If the verb is not already a verb of motion or goal orientation, it is coerced into being one by the construction. Occasionally, e.g. ***fuff*** in (15) and ***pole*** in (16), a word that is not a normal verb at all is coerced into being one by the construction.

(15) Gesner had always found he couldn't **fuff** his way through it.

(16) The first body […] was discovered accidentally by a bargee, who had been **poling** his way up the river.

With manner of motion verbs, the {[REFLDET] way} construction is optional before an [Adv[Direction]]. If present, it shifts the focus from the motion to the result, as indicated by Goldberg and Jackendoff (2004). As it happens, their focus on resultatives may not be quite the right emphasis for this construction. Some clauses at least, using this construction, emphasize goal-orientation rather that result.

(17) I pushed my way through the crowd *towards the door*.

There is nothing in the construction of (17) to say that any result was achieved. I may never have reached the door. The focus of the construction is on the goal—the desire to achieve a result (by movement or otherwise), rather than on the result itself.

There are also some special types of coercion going on, for example with eating and drinking verbs. The nouns *biscuit, toast,* and *crumpets* are not intrinsically of semantic type [[Goal]], but *munching one's way through two and a half packets of biscuits* or *buttered toast and crumpets* coerces the construction into having a goal-achievement meaning – the goal being to finish consuming the food items:

(18) In the tea room, beneath the yellow fleur-de-lys wallpaper, several dozen elderly men munch their way through buttered toast and crumpets.

(19) It was after that call that Annette realised that she had steadily munched her way through two and a half packets of biscuits.

It is worth noting that the activities described in the examples above do not imply any degree of difficulty or obstacles in the agent's pursue of their goal, contrary to Goldberg's (1995) analysis and definition of the *way* construction. In fact, the local context of the construction in example (19) clearly indicates that the activity was performed with ease and without much of a thought – if Annette did not even take notice of the fact that she had managed to gobble up a relatively large amount of biscuits, then one could easily assume that the activity was not strenuous. What is foregrounded in the examples above is the notion of

'progression', rather than 'difficulty', which is further reinforced by the use of the adverbial *steadily* in example (19) (cf. Luzondo-Oyón 2013: 356–357).

Semantically, the verbs participating in the *way* construction differ significantly in the semantics they encode in their verb stems. In an attempt to provide a few unifying threads, Goldberg (1995) proposes two generalized interpretations of the *way* construction, according to which the governing verb can either designate the means of motion or the manner in which the motion occurs. Consider the following invented example (Goldberg 1995: 202):

(20) *Sam joked his way into the meeting*.

As Goldberg points out, the sentence can be paraphrased either as *'Sam got into the meeting by joking'* (the means interpretation) or *'Sam went into the meeting (while) joking'* (the manner interpretation), although she believes that the means interpretation is the predominant one.[13] On the other hand, corpus evidence shows that a clear-cut distinction between the two interpretations is often not possible. Instead, both interpretations may be present simultaneously.[14]

An example is *scythe*, a low-frequency English verb that can be coerced into functioning as a verb of motion by the *way* phrase, as shown in example (21). The verb in this sentence can be paraphrased using the means interpretation (*'he moved through the wild part of the garden by scything down the vegetation*). However, *scythe* in example (22) (from a report of a rugby match) does not lend itself to either of the two interpretations posited by Goldberg:

(21) Gradually, I scythed *my* ***way*** through the wild part of the garden.

(22) The same could not be said of Shontayne Hape, who scythed *his* ***way*** through the Warriors defence for his side's second try on the hour mark.[15]

The domain of example (22) is a report of a rugby match. If a rugby player scythes his (or her) way through the opposing team's defences, he (or she) does not move to other side of the field by literally attacking the other team's unsuspecting players with a scythe in order to incapacitate them – in other words, we cannot paraphrase *scythe* with 'by using a scythe' or with 'while scything down the grass' (or the players, unless one favours a bloodier interpretation). This is because the verb is being used metaphorically. However, the verbs *bluff* and *cheat* can also entail a metaphorical, goal-achieving interpretation, and yet they can be easily paraphrased using the means interpretation (i.e. to achieve a goal by bluffing or cheating). It seems that there is another mechanism involved here – one that occurs in parallel with the semantic coercion the verb *scythe* is subjected to. The mechanism in question is that of metaphorical extension, whereby the semantic component that is transferred in the process is that of force dynamics, rather than the means of achieving a goal or another coextensive action denoting manner. As a result, *scythe* can be best paraphrased with 'aggressively and using brute force'. This simple example of a rather marginal, domain-specific pattern from sports journalism clearly shows that over-reliance on semantic constraints and clear-cut distinctions intended to explain and categorise all possible instances of a linguistic phenomenon often results in the creation of intricate systems of rules and infinite exceptions, which seems to fall apart relatively quickly as soon as corpus evidence is introduced.[16]

4 Non-canonical cases: patterns or exploitations?

Real evidence of actual usage is now plentifully available in the form of very large corpora and the internet, whilst sophisticated, user-friendly corpus tools such as the Sketch Engine allow linguists to easily process and analyse corpus data for a variety of purposes. It is, however, not merely a matter of using the evidence; we also have to learn how to use it. One way in which corpus evidence can and should be used is to establish a distinction between normal and bizarre phraseology. This involves not merely finding authentic citations, but also deciding whether the citations so found represent normal usage, deliberate exploitations of normal usage, or mistakes. If we apply this principle to the study of the *way* construction, we must ask therefore ourselves which lexical verbs governing *way* habitually occur in the construction, and which ones only do so sporadically.

There are about 6000 verbs in everyday use in English. The *way* construction selects around 200 of them. Clearly, it is not the case that this construction normally coerces *any* verb. Only verbs of an appropriate semantic type allow themselves to be coerced in this way, it seems. After the first 200-odd preferred collocating verbs, we are into the whacky world of rhetorical exploitations and invented examples.

Speakers often rely on exploitation by analogy. Because some verbs of violent action and negative cognitive action are commonly found in this construction, others follow by analogy. ***Scheme*** and ***kill*** may not be canonical members of the lexical set of verbs that participate in this construction, but because each of them has at least one of the requisite semantic components, they are coerced into joining it very easily, as we can see in (23).

(23) It is difficult to sum up the succession of kings and sub kings who schemed and killed their **way** to brief spells of power.

However, the real question here is whether or not the verbs *scheme* and *kill* occur in the construction frequently enough for us to consider this use a pattern of normal phraseology. The answer to this question is no – the BNC contains only one example illustrating this use of the two verbs, suggesting that this is merely a creative exploitation of an existing pattern.

Similar examples of exploitations identified in the annotated corpus data created for the Pattern Dictionary of English Verbs include the following:

(24) He then caressed *his* ***way*** through the lyrical, haunting melody of Monk's `Round Midnight, throwing in a couple of surprise twists in the closing bars.

(25) […] hundreds of excited youths abandoned the main arena and jostled to catch a whiff of this liberating new air, leaving a bewildered Acker Bilk tootling *his* ***way*** into the footnotes of history.

The verbs *caress* and *tootle* in the examples above are coerced into acquiring a goal-achievement sense. However, these instances do not represent conventionalised, ossified uses of the governing verbs, but rather one-off, creative exploitations of normal patterns of language use. More specifically, the pattern that is creatively exploited in (24) is '[[Human 1]] caress [[Human 2 | Physical_Object]]', which has to do with a human being gently and tenderly stroking another human being or an object. Similarly, the creative use of *tootle* in 25 can be linked to the intransitive pattern '[[Human]] tootle [NO OBJ] [Adv[Direction]]', which describes a motion even in which a human being leisurely walks or travels in a vehicle. The decision to use the *way*-constructions in these two instances constitutes a deliberate

stylistic choice on the authors' part and is aimed at highlighting the manner component encoded by the verb (i.e. the gentle way in which the song is played) and the progressive nature of the activity in order to achieve the desired poetic effect.

The distinction between norms and their exploitations is not a clear-cut one, but rather a matter of degree. The relationship between the two can be best represented with the ***'double helix' metaphor*** (Hanks, 2009), according to which norms and exploitations are governed by two separate, but closely intertwined systems. The relationship is bidirectional, i.e. if on one hand norms are used to generate new semantic, figurative and syntactic exploitations, the latter can also turn into norms through frequent and continuous use over an extended period of time, in which case they eventually become accepted as normal usage by the language community. Although the line between norm and exploitation is often blurred, one can make significant steps towards a more sensible, level-headed interpretation by using large volumes of corpus evidence and statistical measures to disentangle the grey area between prototypical uses and marginal cases.

5 Idiomatic phraseological uses of 'way'

Semantic opacity, lexicogrammatical fixedness and compositionality are often quoted as criteria in establishing whether or not an expression is to be considered an idiom. Similarly to patterns and exploitations, the distinction between idioms and non-idiomatic expressions is not a black-and-white one – work in corpus-based lexicology (e.g. Moon 1998) has shown that idiomaticity should instead be seen as a cline. As a result, idiomatic expressions lend themselves particularly well to corpus-driven explorations, whereby statistical measures can be used to identify fixed and semi-fixed multi-word expressions. Another area of difficulty that can be efficiently addressed through corpus-driven analysis is that of the lexical alternation, i.e. the phenomenon where a lexical item in a pattern is regularly substituted with a near-synonym. Consider, for instance, the following two examples from our analysis of *way*:

(26) John Cardwell is Lothian's new regional assessor and has worked *his* ***way*** *up the ladder to* reach the top job.

(27) At 19 she went into the family firm and worked *her* ***way*** *through the ranks* to become the most vehement defender of her father […]

The idiom *to work one's way up the ladder/through the ranks)* is closely related to a more general *way*-pattern exhibited by *work*, i.e. [[Human]] works {[REFLDET] way} {up} (to [[Human_Role]])

(28) I gradually worked *my* ***way*** *up* to being one of the house engineers and it took off from there.

The idiom can be explained as a fully institutionalized and ossified version of the *way* construction in (28). It is worth noting that the *ladder* and *ranks* in examples (26) and (27) are more or less freely interchangeable – choosing one over the other does not alter the meaning or the semantic prosody of the sentence. This example contrasts well with idioms such as *to scare the (living) daylights out of somebody*, in which the verb may alternate with its near-synonym *terrify* (e.g. *Hogwood's [set] is on two CDs and has Emma Kirkby terrifying the*

living daylights out of her listeners). This example of lexical alternation is to be attributed to linguistic creativity – by selecting a stronger, emotionally charged close synonym, the speaker or writer wishes to further emphasize the intensity of the fear experienced by the people involved (*'her listeners'*) (for a detailed account, cf. Može 2017). The choice of synonym is therefore highly significant.

Another advantage of using very large corpora is that they allow us to identify marginal idiomatic expressions that are used only sporadically in text or conversation. A good example for ***way*** is the idiom in (29), which corresponds to the pattern '{shiver} works {its way} {down [POSDET] spine}':

(29) She paused, *feeling a shiver* work *its **way** down her spine* as she met the black eyes that were regarding her so closely […]

This idiom can also be explained as a figurative extension of the general pattern describing the *way* construction. However, the verb *work* in the example is not coerced into developing a goal-achievements sense – what is expressed is ***fictive motion*** (Talmy 2000a). In other words: there is no real motion involved, as a shiver, i.e. an involuntary physical reaction, cannot literally travel down somebody's body. Even though there is no factive motion involved, the cascading effect the shiver typically has on the body enables speakers to associate it with a motion event, making the affected part of the body a fictive sensory path (cf. Talmy 2000a: 103–138). This kind of examples are particularly interesting from a cognitive linguistic perspective, as they provide researchers with a unique opportunity to study the connection between the way we perceive and conceptualise event in the world and the different phraseological patterns and communicative strategies we use to express them linguistically. The implications for corpus lexicography, however, are limited, as marginal patterns of language use are normally not covered in dictionaries.

6 Conclusion

Our corpus-driven approach to analysing the phraseology of ***way*** shows how a highly complex noun participates in a variety of literal and non-literal patterns, the meaning of which can be tackled by adopting an evidence-driven approach. We argue that a usage-based, probabilistic approach, recognizing the analogical nature of meaning, yields a more realistic overview of the combinatorial properties of a semantically and syntactically complex word such as *way*. The availability of large English corpora and sophisticated statistical corpus tools such as the Sketch Engine allow researchers to easily identify clear-cut cases of normal phraseology, as well as to tackle the grey area of marginal and borderline cases, ultimately resulting in a full account of the semantic and syntactic behaviour exhibited by the analysed lexical items.

Construction grammarians (e.g. Jackendoff 1990, Goldberg 1995, Goldberg and Jackendoff 2004) have written extensively about ***way***, providing detailed analyses of the so-called *way* construction and its morphosemantic and grammatical features. Although these approaches often provide valuable insights into constructional meaning, they tend to be characterized by an obsession with semantic constraints and necessary conditions that sometimes fail to account for examples of real language use. Another key issue is the

frequent use of invented examples instead of corpus data. The FrameNet Constructicon (Fillmore, Lee-Goldman and Rhodes 2012) represents a step in the right direction in that it provides a more corpus-based account of the *way* construction, alongside annotated samples of supposedly representative corpus sentences. Nonetheless, the Constructicon appears to suffer from a similar shortcoming to many constructionist approaches: it categorizes the *way* construction into subtypes, despite the fact that a clear-cut distinction between the proposed interpretations (i.e. means, manner, neutral) cannot be made.

In this paper, we reject such a black-and-white view of language and meaning and point to the need for a fresh, data-driven approach to the study of lexis and constructions. Traditional linguistic approaches and theories must be revisited in light of new linguistic evidence extracted from corpora. To achieve this goal, we propose that systematic lexical analyses be carried out in a rigorously scientific way in order to facilitate the creation of linguistic resources that reflect real language use, rather than pre-conceived notions and speculations about meaning and grammar.

Notes

[1] Scores are calculated using logDice (cf. Rychlý, 2008).

[2] The terminology used in this paper to describe patterns eschews generative terminology such as phrase markers and the notion of an 'external argument'. Instead, the notation adopted focuses on clause roles and valencies, supported by notions such as rank shift and co-reference (a.k.a. reflexivity). It is similar to the grammatical concepts developed by Tesnière (1959) and Halliday (1961), and described by Young (1980); subsequently used, with variations, by Sinclair, Brazil, Hoey, and many others. This terminology is augmented by the notion of the semantic type, which is inherited from Pustejovsky (1995).

[3] Freely available online at http://pdev.org.uk/.

[4] The term is to be understood in the context of Halliday's SPOCA grammar, which defines five basic functional elements (or clause roles) of any English clause, i.e. the subject (S), the predicator (P), the object (O), the complement (C), and the adverbial (A) (cf. Leech, Deuchar and Hoogenraad 1982).

[5] For a more detailed account of the CPA ontology of semantic types, see Hanks and Ježek (2010).

[6] CPA patterns are formulated using the following standard format: semantic types are given in double square brackets e.g. [[Human]], and may be followed by a contextual role after an equals sign (e.g. 'Judge' in [[Human = Judge]]. Curly brackets are used to list lexical sets (e.g. {way}). Syntactic structures such as *that*-clauses and non-finite infinitival and participial clauses (e.g. {that-CLAUSE}, {of [-ING]}, {to/INF [V]}, etc.). Single square brackets are used for determiners (e.g. [DET] – any determiner; [POSDET] – possessive determiner; [REFLDET] – reflexive possessive determiner). The symbol '|' is used as an 'or' operator to introduce alternations (e.g. the use of the operator in '{(a)round | through | out of | past}' indicates that any of these prepositions may head the prepositional phrase in the adverbial slot of pattern C). Finally, single round brackets indicate an optional element.

[7] An adverbial is a word or phrase such as 'to Birmingham' or 'yesterday'. An adverbial in English functions either as an argument of a verb or as an optional extra, adding information to the sentence but not essential to its structure. The grammatical terminology of linguistics and lexicography is in chaos, partly due to desperate attempts to cling onto outmoded terminology inherited from 17th- and 18th-century grammarians and partly due to the mistaken belief that usage in natural language

conforms to the rules of predicate logic. CPA uses a modern set of terms based on Halliday (1961) and Young (1980).

[8] Further to this point, it is worth noting that any uses where 'way' performs purely a textual or pragmatic function (e.g. its use as an intensifier in prepositional phrases such as *way over the top*; *costs go way over original estimates*) will not be covered here either.

[9] Also referred to as 'object of result' by Jackendoff (1990).

[10] Invented examples may be perfectly well-formed, but they are nevertheless always to be regarded with suspicion until or unless they are independently confirmed by evidence of actual usage.

[11] This is confirmed by Luzondo-Oyón (2013), who quotes the following example from the COCA corpus: 'They giggled their way through it [a film or TV programme]'.

[12] The importance of context in interpreting the meaning of *way* construction has also been emphasized by Luzondo-Oyón (2013).

[13] In an analysis of corpus data carried out by Goldberg, the means interpretation occurs in 96% of all instances in the sample, which would seem to indicate that the manner interpretation is only marginal. All throughout her account of the construction, Goldberg tends to lean towards the means interpretation not only in cases where both paraphrases are plausible, but also when analysing examples prototypically associated with the manner interpretation (cf. Goldberg 1995: 202–203).

[14] This view is shared by Luzondo-Óyon (2013: 358–361) and further supported by subsequent work carried out within the FrameNet Constructicon project (cf. Fillmore, Goldman-Lee and Rhodes 2012, Sato 2012). In the Construction, a third subtype, i.e. the 'Way_neutral' construction, is introduced, in order to accommodate uses that do not fit well with the other two interpretations (i.e. mainly constructions with neutral verbs such as *make* and *wend*).

[15] Example taken from the Oxford English Corpus (available through the Sketch Engine at https://www.sketchengine.co.uk).

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Appendix I: Patterns in which *way* is governed by a verb

The 25 verbs in BNC most associated with 'way' as direct object, arranged in alphabetical order, are listed below, together with the normal pattern(s) in which each participates and examples selected. Raw frequencies of each combination in BNC and Word Sketch statistical salience scores of the combination are given in square brackets.

1. **change/V way/N** [185; 6.81]
   1.1. [[Human]] changes {[REFLDET] ways}: *If you're a couch potato or telly addict you'd better change your ways.*
   1.2. [[Entity | Eventuality]] changes {the way {{(that) | in which} [CLAUSE]}: *the growth of optical-fibre ... services ... will radically change the way in which information is made available in the home* | *Choreographers cannot in any way change the ways in which their dancers move* | *The ultimate step in the process of stress prevention is changing the way we view ourselves.*
2. **clear/V way/N** [123; 7.03]
   2.1. [[Entity | Eventuality]] clears {the way} {for [[Event]]}: *a vote that clears the way for ordination of women priests.*
   2.2. [[Human | Event]] clears {{a | the} way} [Adv[Direction]]: *the police had cleared a way through to the front door of the building.*
3. **come/V way/N** [673; 7.17]
   3.1. {come [IMPERATIVE]} {this way} (please): *'By all means, ' he said. `Come this way.' He led them into the mortuary.*
   3.2. [[Human]] comes {all the way {from [[Location]]}}: *John Line had come all the way from Australia.*
   3.3. *Idiom*: [[Human | Entity]] have come {a long way} {(since [[Time Point]]): *We have come a long way since then* | *The half-caste prostitute's son had come a long way.*
   3.4. [[{Entity | Eventuality} = Beneficial]] come {[POSDET] way}: *There are lots of new opportunities coming your way in the year ahead.*
4. **examine/V way/N** [110; 6.57]:
   4.1. [[Human | Institution | Document]] examines {[DET] way} {in which [CLAUSE]}: *In our Introduction we examined the eccentric way in which this country has traditionally approached questions of liberty*.
   4.2. [[Human | Institution | Document]] examines {ways of [-ING]}: *The FA [Football Association] is to examine **ways** of encouraging more professional players to take up refereeing after they retire.*
5. **explore/V way/N** [96; 6.70]
   5.1. [[Human| Institution]] explores {ways of [-ING]}: *we must explore new ways of making it ... effective.*
   5.2 [[Human | Institution]] explores {ways {in which [CLAUSE]}: *Eric Deeson explores ways in which the future* […] *may shape the teaching of mathematics.*
6. **feel/V way/N** [344; 7.07]:
   6.1. [[Human]] feels {{this| that | the same} way {about [[Entity | Eventuality]]}: *Rosie felt the same way about her parents*

6.2. [[Human]] feels {[REFLDET] way} [Adv[Direction]]:
   a. Literal: *She … plunged into the darkness of the right-hand tunnel, feeling her way along the walls.*
   b. Figurative: *While the Governor felt his **way** towards a political solution, military intelligence feared 'open rebellion'.*

7. **find/V way/N** [2224; 8.78]
   7.1. [[Human | Animal]] finds {[REFLDET] way} [Adv[Direction]]:
      a. Literal: *Think you can find your way around Tripoli?* | *a mean friend of her mother found her way … into The Lilac Bus* | *how animals find their way about* | *the theory that the birds find their way back by progressing along a line of recognised landmarks rather than by solar or lunar navigation* | *When the party was over, all but the very young [orang utangs] … would find their way back into the forest*.
      b. Figurative: *a host of mocking little phrases found their insidious way into her mind.*
   7.2. [[Human | Institution]] finds {[DET] way {(in which) to [V]} | {of [-ING]}}: Figurative: *Eventually Vuk and Kopitar found a **way** to get the book published and it appeared in 1818* | *the Home Secretary and his colleagues have found a **way** in which to deal with the problem swiftly* | *developing therapeutic skills and finding new ways of working.*
   7.3. [[Human | Animal]] finds {a way {{(a)round | through | out of | past} [[Situation = Problem]]}: *Lashley taught laboratory rats to find their way through a maze to a reward box.*
   7.4. [[Human]] finds {[DET] way} {out | forward | through | past}: *If there was a light on I could find my way out easy.*

8. **fight /V way**/N [291; 7.68]:
   8.1. [[Human]] fighs {[REFLDET] way} [Adv[Direction]]
      a. Literal: *Prince Rupert managed to fight his way towards London.*
      b. Figurative: *She struggled for life in a dizzy world of red fire and molten lead.*

9. **force/V way/N** [216; 7.36]:
   9.1. [[Human]] forces {a way} {through [[Location]]}: *Raybestos' second attempt was successful when 25 gardai brutally forced a way through a human barrier of women and children to allow Raybestos's waste onto the site.*
   9.2. [[Human | Animal | Stuff]] forces {[REFLDET] way} [Adv[Direction]]
      a. Literal*: He turned round and forced his way back into the cabin, past the protesting passengers.*| *[…] a large, frightened animal like a bear may be able to force its way through.* | *The mass of new, hot rock forcing its way up through the crater floor had both helped to displace the water from the crater, and heated it up to nearly boiling point […]*
      b. Figurative*: Lee Clark has fought a patient battle to force his way into Keegan's plans and now he is rapidly proving indispensable*

10. **give/V way/N** [1346; 7.58]:
   10.1. {leg | knee | ankle} gives {[NODET] way}: *After a moment, her knees gave way and she slithered to the floor in a clattering hail of cutlery.*

10.2. [[Building_Part | Surface]] gives {[NODET] way}: *The floor seemed to give way beneath her.* | *Lord Denning stated that the position would have been different if the stairs leading to the basement had given way.*

10.3. *British*: [[Vehicle]] gives {[NODET] way}: *Where roads are crossed, raised crossings are provided, with ramps from the road up to the cycle-street's level and markings to indicate clearly that it is crossing cars that must give way.*

10.4. [[Human | Institution]] gives {[NODET] way}: *a woman's argument was too much for him, and he gave way*. | *Late in October 1951 Labour gave way to a Churchill-led Conservative government.*

10.5. [[Human]] gives {[NODET] way} {to [[Emotion]]}: *She rebuked herself, feeling deeply ashamed, for having given way earlier to despair and self-pity*.

10.6. [[Entity 1 | Eventuality 1]] gives {[NODET] way} {to [[Entity 2 | Eventuality 2]]}: *Late in October 1951 Labour gave way to a Churchill-led Conservative government.* | *The next day their feelings of joy gave way to dismay.* | *The trees gave way to scrub and there was little shade.* | *Scuds of rain gave way to sun as we got near to the end of the loch.* | *Transformation gave way to a grim fight for survival.*

11. **go/V way/N** [1751; 8.16]:

11.1. [[Human | Animal | Vehicle]] goes {[DET] (MOD) way}

a. Literal: *Maggie's gone the opposite way from Tesco's; her heels are sinking into grass.*

b. Figurative: *Experts say it's good news for Rover, which could have been sold off if today's European Court ruling had gone the other way*.

11.2. *Idiom*: [[Human | Institution]] goes {{all the | the whole} way}: *Many organizations have gone the whole way and created entirely different systems for each of these needs*.

11.3. [[Entity | Eventuality]] go {QUANT way} {to | towards [[Event = -ING, Goal]]}: *Cuba has gone a long way to reducing gender inequalities, though power relations still clearly favour men, a fact of which all Cubans, including their leaders, are very aware*.

a. [[Action]] goes {a {good | great} way} {to | towards [[Event = -ING, Goal]]}: *Government policy was aimed at reducing the number of smokers in the country and an advertising ban would go a good way to achieving this, he said*.

11.4. [[Human = PLURAL]] go {[REFLDET] {{separate | different} ways*}: The twins have gone their separate ways and become estranged* […] | *At Skeldale House we parted to go our different ways*.

a. [[Human]] go {[REFLDET] {own way}: *Once again, he was his own man, went his own way which meant he often lacked utterly the pleasing, the plasticine complicity a great screen actor needs.* | *Committee members could go their own way whenever national concerns dictated a strictly national path*.

11.5. [[Eventuality]] goes {[POSDET] way}: *`By the third round I knew the fight was going my way,' Leonard said.*

11.6. [[Entity 1]] goes {the way of [[Entity 2]]}: *Companies who do not adopt this EIS culture into the `90s will certainly go the way of the dinosaur*.

a. *Idiom*: [[Entity]] goes {the way of all flesh}: *The Journal's final lament is to the grilled cheese sandwich or the croque monsieur. Once a golden brown staple, crisp on the outside and creamy within, it has gone the way of all flesh*.

12. **lead/V way/N** [593; 8.03]:
    12.1. [[Human]] leads {the way} [Adv[Direction]]
        a. Literal: *Bill is already leading the way across the airport*.
        b. Figurative: *A revived housing market could lead the way out of the recession*.
    12.2. [[Human | Institution]] leads {the way} (in [[-ING]]): *Thomas Cook led the way in popularizing winter sports for women* […] | *America led the way in setting up an international system for dealing with the Indochina refugees*.
13. **like/V way/N** [191; 6.74]:
    13.1. [[Human]] likes {the way [that-CLAUSE]}: *Charles didn't like the way the conversation was going.*
14. **lose/V way/N** [163; 6.46]:
    14.1. [[Human]] lose {REFLDET way} [Adv[Location]]
        a. Literal: *She slipped on banana-skins in the street, and even in places she knew quite well she frequently lost her way*.
        b. Figurative: *He lost his way in the middle of speeches*.
15. **make/V way/N** [1999; 7.48]:
    15.1. [[Human | Animal]] makes {[REFLDET] way} [Adv[Direction]]:
        a. Literal: *As if Alan had excused her, Carolyn made her way to the house*.
        b. Figurative: *Christianity was slower to make its way in the West and its adherents slower to assimilate the culture of their pagan contemporaries*.
    15.2. [[Entity 1]] makes {[NO DET] way} {for [[Entity 2]]}:
        a. Literal: *I have vacated that nice little office in back there, making way for an older man* […]
        b. Figurative: *The Gordon Bennett races made way for the first Grand Prix in 1906 when Szisz of Romania won the inaugural French Grand Prix at Le Mans*.
16. **open/V way/N** [234; 7.19]
    16.1. [[Human | Institution | Eventuality 1]] open {the way} {for | to [[Eventuality 2 = Desirable]]}: *On March 1 a Cabinet decree opened the way for a number of recently released Mafia leaders to be rearrested*. | *We opened the way to the setting-up of Channel 4, independent radio, satellite television and multi-channel cable TV networks*.
    16.2. [[Aperture]] opens {the {other | opposite} | a {short | little} way}: *if space is really short, a door can be moved, rehung to open the other way, or replaced with one that slides*. | *The door of the room opened a little way and a large tabby cat insinuated itself through the gap*.
17. **pave/V way/N** [327; 8.76]:
    17.1. [[Eventuality 1 | Human | Institution]] pave {the way} {for | to [[Eventuality 2]]}: *Unemployment and recession increased the decay of inner city social systems, and helped pave the way for the drug-fuelled despair of the late Eighties*. | *Such developments are paving the way to rapprochement between conventional and complementary medicine.*

18. **pick/V way/N** [188; 7.5]:
    18.1. [[Human | Animal]] picks {[REFLDET] way} [Adv[Direction]]: *Sandy was already picking her way through the garden towards the front of the house*.
        a. Figurative: *Publishers and booksellers will have to pick their way through a landscape made strange and problematic by change*.
19. **point/V way/N** [152; 7.12]:
    19.1. [[Human | Physical_object]] points {[DET] way}: *A woman points one way but I see a man with a bulge in his coat and I leap on him.* | *If lava solidifies 500,000 years later, the congealed magnetic needles will point the opposite way*.
        a. Figurative: [[State_of_Affairs]] points {[DET] way}: *There was evidence that could be seen to point either way and so the verdict was left open*.
    19.2. [[Entity | Eventuality 1]] point {the way} {(to | towards [[Eventuality 2]])}: *Their work points the way to a revision of plate tectonic theory and ideas about mountain building.* | *Sexual intimacy, or the absence of it, can also point the way towards greater intimacy with God.*
20. **push/V way/N** [197; 7.43]:
    20.1. [[Human | Animal]] pushes {[REFLDET] way} [Adv[Direction]]: *Bernice pushed her way through the confused mass of people, looking for Miles or Piper*. | *One of the sheep pushed its way out of the flock in response to the lamb's feeble noise*.
    20.2. [[Plant]] pushes {[REFLDET] way} (up) {through [[Surface = Ground]]}: *Lilies have to push their way through thyme covering the soil of their pots* […]
21. **stay/V way/N** [96; 6.4]:
    21.1. [[Entity | State_of_Affairs]] stays {that way}: *I'm happily married and want to stay that way.* | *Now that Mr De Benedetti has been engulfed by Italy's bribery scandals, things are likely to stay that way*.
22. **suggest/V way/N** [197; 6.83]:
    22.1. [[Human | Document]] suggests {[DET] way(s) {of [-ING] | to [V] | (in which) [CLAUSE]}}: *This month's feature suggests ways of designing your own artwork.* | *Three US scientists have suggested a way in which the hole in the ozone layer might be repaired.* | *Vivien Saunders suggests three ways to improve your timing*.
    22.2. [[Human]] suggests {[DET] way} {around | out of [[Eventuality = Undesirable]]}: *The other problem is rather more difficult, both to explain and to suggest ways around.* | *A bottle of Chianti Classico for the reader who suggests the most tactful way out of this conversational senso unico before next Saturday*.
    22.3. [[Human | Document]] suggests {[DET] way(s)} {forward}: *We hope that by the end of the conference we will be able to suggest some acceptable ways forward for the future* […] | *The bus and coach council* […] *was about to produce a document suggesting ways forward*.
23. **walk/V way/N** [154; 6.98]:
    23.1. [[Human]] walks {[DET] (MOD) way} [Adv[Direction]]
        a. [[Human]] walks {{all the} | {the whole} way} [Adv[Direction]]: *He walked all the way to Upper Street, near the bus-stops, before he found a free phonebox.* | *He wondered if Slater intended to walk the whole way with him, or whether he was only going as far as the Air Gallery* […]

b. [[Human]] walks {a {little | long | short} way} [Adv[Direction]]: *Well wrapped up, we walked a little way out of the town.* | *I'm used to walking a long way carrying the baby*.
c. [[Human]] walks {{this | that | the {same | opposite | other} way}}: *Mrs Paviour surely wouldn't walk this way in the dark, would she?* | *Ruby, however, meant to walk the opposite way and glided proudly up Fleet Street* […]

24. **wind/V way/N** [90; 6.81]:
24.1. [[Human | Human_Group | Animal_Group | Vehicle]] winds {[REFLDET] way} [Adv[Direction]]: *Theodora wound her way down the long narrow garden, bowing her head under the arching tendrils of the old roses* […] | *Dozens of the cars will wind their way around the scenic coastline on Friday*.
24.2. [[Route | Waterway]] winds {[REFLDET] way} [Adv[Direction]]: *Walk along the path, as it winds its way up into the mountain.* | *These waterways wind their way through countryside often inaccessible by road and unchanged over the years*.

25. **work/V way/N** [572; 7.91]:
25.1. [[Human]] works {a way {out (of)| round [[Eventuality = Problem]]}}: *She got up stiffly from the table, with one last look at the scowling form of the man trying to work a way out of his hopeless situation* […]
25.2. [[Human | Vehicle | Animal]] works {[REFLDET] way} [Adv[Direction]]
a. Literal: *He worked his way down the right side of the road*.
b. Figurative: *She could see how he had worked his way into her aunt's affections*.
25.3. [[Human]] {[REFLDET] way} works {through [[Activity = Study Programme]]}: […] *she had worked her way through graduate school pushing grand pianos down stairways, or dropkicking boxes of Wedgwood into waiting vans*.
25.4. [[Human]] works {[REFLDET] way} {up} (to [[Human_Role]]): *I gradually worked my way up to being one of the house engineers and it took off from there*.
25.5. *Idiom*: [[Human]] {[REFLDET] way} works {up the {ladder | ranks}}: *John Cardwell is Lothian's new regional assessor and has worked his way up the ladder to reach the top job*.
25.6. [[Relationship | Abstract_Entity | Eventuality]] works {[DET] way}: *Level three partnership works both ways and in every way* […] | *It was hard to explain that things don't work that way in Hull*.
25.7. *Idiom*: {shiver} works {its way} {down [POSDET] spine}: *She paused, feeling a shiver work its way down her spine as she met the black eyes that were regarding her so closely* […]